

never going to end, like agriculture, and he did not put any money in his budget for important priorities like reforming the crop insurance program.

Maybe there were only two votes in the House today on the President's budget because the President cuts Medicare. In spite of all the rhetoric about saving Medicare and putting aside 15 percent, the President's budget cut Medicare by about \$10 million.

Maybe it was because the President's budget busted the budget caps. I mean it could be any of those reasons, but the fact of the matter is that when all the posturing was done in this Chamber and all the lofty rhetoric was put aside, it came time to vote, nobody was there to vote in favor of the President's budget.

So we rolled out an alternative, the Republican budget plan, today, and already for weeks our friends on the other side, the Democrats, have been assailing that budget. But then, as my colleagues know, the rhetoric started to tone down a little bit because they looked at it, and they said: "Well, you know we want to attack the Republican budget for Social Security," and then they realized that we were locking up, walling off the Social Security Trust Fund, making sure that all the payroll tax was actually going into the trust fund where it should. And then they thought, well maybe we can attack the Republicans again on Medicare because they did not fall for the President's percentages game and say, well, we are going to do 15 percent here and 62 percent here, and 20 percent here, 10 percent here. But then they realized that by locking up the payroll tax the Republican budget puts aside more money for Social Security and Medicare than the President's budget.

So, that issue is off the table, and the fact of the matter is they could not attack, they want to attack for the veterans budget, but the Republican budget actually funded veterans at \$1 billion more than the President's budget. It funded agriculture at \$6 billion more than the President's budget.

So then it was the old traditional line about it is tax cuts for the rich. Well, as my colleagues know, if we look at the budget, there are not any tax cuts specified in there. Yes, we believe that we ought to have a debate. Once we have walled off Social Security and taken care of that program and Medicare, and there is \$800 billion projected over the next 10 years that comes in over and above that, then we believe we ought to engage in debate in this city about whether or not to give that back to the American people or whether to spend it here in Washington. But we will have that debate when and if the time comes. But in the meantime we need to do the responsible thing and the honest thing, and that is to wall off Social Security and make sure that it is there for the next generation of Americans.

In fact, I want to read something here that AARP, Mr. Horace Deets, the Executive Director of AARP, said about the Republican budget plan. It says: "AARP believes it is important to protect Social Security's growing reserves and is pleased that the House budget resolution provides that protection. Over the next 10 years, Social Security is projected to contribute \$1.8 trillion of the unified surplus. Preserving Social Security's reserves not only allows our country to better prepare for the impending retirement of the baby boom generation, but also gives us greater financial flexibility to enact long-term reform in both Social Security and Medicare once the options have been carefully considered and their impact understood."

That is from the AARP, and what I would simply say to the American people here this evening is:

"When you listen to all this rhetoric over the course of the next few months, who are you going to trust to solve these problems, Social Security and Medicare? Are you going to trust the people who are going to be honest with you and say that we are going to put the payroll tax, Social Security and Medicare, aside where it should be walled off to be used for those purposes, or are you going to trust the people who want to keep raiding it like we have in the past?"

I think the American people are wise, I think the Americans in this country who are currently benefiting from Social Security and Medicare have figured this out, and I have one simple message for them this evening, and that is:

Do not buy the lie. We have heard it before, we are going to hear it again. Work with us in a constructive way to build a better future for the 21st century.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to the opportunity, when we get past all the posturing and all the rhetoric, to work with my colleagues on the other side to come up with a budget that takes care of these important priorities.

TRANSPORTATION EMPLOYEE FAIR TAXATION ACT OF 1999

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. BAIRD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BAIRD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce important legislation to provide tax fairness for thousands of hard-working Americans throughout this Nation who are employed by interstate water carriers. I am talking about river boat pilots, I am talking about men and women who work on barges, and I am talking about other hard-working crew members who do an honest day's work and want a fair shake when it comes to paying their taxes.

Madam Speaker, I am deeply concerned that a significant number of interstate waterway employees who are employed on vessels that operate on the Columbia River, the Mississippi, the Ohio, the Missouri, the Kanawha, and many other inland waterways throughout this Nation may be double or even triple-taxed for their labor. These river pilots, officers and other crew members perform most of their work on rivers which flow through multiple States, and in many cases these folks are subject to income tax filings and additional withholdings from multiple States.

The rivers these folks navigate, whether it be for shipping, for transporting passengers, for tourism or other purposes often course through the territories of multiple States. That is a fact of nature, and because of that fact the folks who ply their trade on these rivers are subject to taxation by several States. That is simply not fair.

When truck drivers, railway workers and aviation employees go about their jobs, all of whom are required to conduct their work in States other than their home State, Congress has seen fit to grant them an exemption from this double or triple taxation unless a majority of the work is performed in another State.

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This is not so for interstate waterway employees. No. If one is a crew member on a barge, they can be required to pay taxes in several States, and that is simply not fair.

An airline pilot, for example, is subject to taxation by the State in which the pilot resides, period. Only if pilots earn 50 percent or more of their income while working in another State are they subject to taxation by that other State. This restriction, for all practical purposes, exempts airline employees from multiple taxation. However, interstate water carriers, bargemen, river boat pilots, ferry boat operators, for some reason these people are treated differently, and that is simply not fair.

Frankly, Madam Speaker, it is a clear example of taxation without representation, an obvious oversight of this body.

Over the past 22 years, Congress has acted to address inequities in the Tax Code when it dealt with interstate transportation employees. I am asking my colleagues today to again take action to address and correct this problem.

Interstate waterway employees are devoted, hard working folks, who provide essential transportation services throughout our Nation and pay their fair share of taxes in their home States. Additionally, the companies which employ these workers contribute significantly to the economic well-being of the State's concerns. Yet,

Madam Speaker, due to an existing oversight, workers living in my district in southwest Washington may be subject to additional tax burdens imposed by other States along the Columbia River.

The current law allows States to impose additional taxes based on the percentage of time their vessel was docked or operating in those States' waters and I will say it again, that is simply not fair.

Madam Speaker, we can do something about that. We can make the law fair and we can make it apply equally to everyone.

Madam Speaker, the legislation I am introducing today, the Transportation Employee Fair Taxation Act of 1999, will correct this oversight.

My bill will expressly prohibit the taxation of income earned by waterway workers by States other than the ones in which the workers reside. It will close the unfortunate loophole that says we treat all the other groups of interstate workers one way and bargemen and river pilots the other.

It is not complex legislation. It is very straightforward. It is not lengthy legislation. It is a two-page bill. But it is good legislation. It is needed legislation and it is fair legislation. I am proud to say also that it is bipartisan legislation.

Of the 12 original cosponsors of this measure, 8 are Democrats and 4 are Republicans. So I urge my colleagues from both parties to join in this effort, to ensure tax fairness for all of our citizens by taking swift action to pass this bill.

NEEDED: JUSTICE AND A POLITICAL SOLUTION FOR THE KURDISH PEOPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, before we adjourn for our spring district work period, I wanted to draw attention to the plight of the Kurdish people.

There was a lot of attention to this otherwise usually ignored issue last month with the apprehension of Abdullah Ocalan, the leader of the Kurdistan Workers Party, the PKK.

Mr. Ocalan has been fighting for autonomy for the Kurdish people who are the victims of oppression by Turkey, as well as Iraq, Iran and Syria. The Turkish regime refuses to even acknowledge the Kurds' existence, referring to them as Mountain Turks, prohibiting all expression of Kurdish culture and language in an effort to forcibly assimilate them, and jailing, torturing or killing Kurdish leaders.

The Iraqi regime has used poison gas on its Kurds and has destroyed 4,000 Kurdish villages. The Iranian regime

has lined them up against firing squads, while the Syrian regime barely tolerates them with no rights.

Madam Speaker, while the treatment of the Kurds in Iraq, Iran and Syria is deplorable, the Turkish mistreatment of the Kurdish people is particularly shocking for a very basic reason. Turkey is considered an ally of the United States, a member of NATO, and the recipient over many years of millions in economic and especially military assistance courtesy of the American taxpayer. This embarrassing record of American support for the Turkish regime reached a new low last month when our intelligence and diplomatic services actually helped a Turkish commando team to capture Mr. Ocalan in Kenya. This action violates the spirit of the torture convention to which the United States is a signatory.

Mr. Ocalan, had he been here in the United States I cannot imagine that he would have been turned over to Turkey, just as Italy refused to do so when he was in Italy. This shameful collaboration with Turkey has resulted in Mr. Ocalan being held in solitary confinement on an island prison in Turkey with no access to his international team of lawyers.

Plans call for him to be tried in a secret military-type court with no jury and no foreign observers.

Given the unlawfulness of this abduction and the illegitimacy of the state security court's tribunal, there is ample reason to assume that Mr. Ocalan will not receive a fair trial.

Madam Speaker, I want to note that the injustice of the Ocalan abduction and trial and the much larger issue of the oppression of the Kurdish people has not gone unnoticed around the world. Here in Washington over the past weekend, a rally was held across the street from the Turkish Embassy. The Congressional Human Rights Caucus and the Human Rights Alliance recently commemorated the 11th anniversary of Saddam Hussein's massacre of over 5,000 Kurds in the village of Halabja.

The suffering of the Kurdish people has not gone completely unnoticed but we need to do more for the Kurdish people. The government of Turkey's undeclared war on the Kurds has claimed close to 40,000 lives and caused more than 3 million people to become refugees.

Mr. Ocalan's appearance in Rome with a pledge that he was ready to renounce violence presented an opportunity for peace but neither Turkey nor the United States took him up on his offer.

Madam Speaker, let me say it is not too late. We should use our leverage over Turkey to demand that an international tribunal prosecute Mr. Ocalan since Turkey is at war with the Kurds and cannot be expected to conduct a fair trial. I hope that the European

Union to which Turkey is seeking admission will also put pressure on Turkey. We must demand a fair trial for Mr. Ocalan but this should only be a first step in our efforts to press Turkey to enter into negotiations to achieve a political solution to this ongoing struggle. This is fundamentally in Turkey's interest, too, in the long run, since they cannot continue to keep down 35 million people living in their midst.

On January 21, we celebrated, or the Kurds celebrated their new year, which is called Newroz, symbolizing a day of resistance and deliverance from tyranny for the Kurds. In that spirit, I hope that we will soon witness a turning point from the terrible tragedies that the Kurdish people have experienced and instead see the rebirth of a strong and free Kurdistan.

Madam Speaker, this week U.S. forces have gone into the battle in the former Yugoslavia in an effort to prevent the genocide of the Kosovar people. I strongly support that effort which shows America at its best and I hope that the same resolve and sense of outrage that caused us to act to protect the Kosovars will finally motivate America and the free world to put an end to the genocide of the Kurdish people.

Let me point out that the Kurdish new year, Madam Speaker, was actually last Sunday, March 21, Newroz, and that was the day when the Kurds celebrate their new year.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION FROM CHINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Madam Speaker, I take this opportunity to speak to one issue which is of some national significance because it evidences a pattern that is occurring, and that is illegal immigration from China.

I would like to point out that, Madam Speaker, that Guam is a very isolated community from Washington, DC. It is some 9,000 miles away and it is the closest U.S. soil to China.

During the past year, there has been an inordinate amount of illegal immigration into Guam from China, and we assumed that it was from perhaps nearby the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, but as it has turned out these are illegal immigrants who come in on fishing boats directly from the Province of Fujing inside China.

This kind of illegal immigration is not the kind of illegal immigration that we normally assume exists, which is that people are fleeing either for political reasons or looking for an economic better way of life.

All of those might be part of this, but usually when we watch the kinds of